

P L A N
OF A
P R A C T I C A L
DICTIONARY OF MUSIC;

COMPILED FROM
THE MOST APPROVED TREATISES; THE AUTHENTIC
MSS. OF DR. ARNOLD, DR. BOYCE, &c. &c.

INCLUDING SOME
ARTICLES OF AN HISTORICAL AND THEORETICAL
NATURE.

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TO DR. BURNEY.

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22-8

AMONG the principal difficulties encountered by students, in any of the arts or sciences, are those which arise from obscurity, or want of precision, in the technical terms. The nomenclature of Music has peculiar disadvantages, being in some parts redundant, in others extremely deficient. For instance, the words *Air*, *Song*, and *Tune*, are nearly synonymous, while *Key*, *Note*, and *Tone*, have each two or three distinct significations: the great variety also of foreign terms continually imported, calls for more explanation than has yet been afforded by any work of this kind in the English language.

Grassineau's translation of Brossard, in 1740, was indeed of considerable utility at the time in which it appeared; but its sources were not copious, and its execution is, in many places, inaccurate.

Rousseau's elegant performance, written chiefly to expose French music, and to demonstrate the superiority of the Italian School, as it is entirely restrained to national terms, cannot be of general use. An English version of this book, published in 1779, is so inaccurate, as to be exceptionable throughout*.

The valuable Lexicon of Walther, in the German language, is deservedly praised by Dr. Burney, for its various and accurate information. This

* See Monthly Review, vol. ix, p. 422.

work, at present very scarce*, and intelligible but to few in this country, will afford a great part of the materials for this new design.

The Author was induced to undertake the compilation of a Dictionary, partly from his own want of a general index to many valuable treatises, of which the arrangements are obscure; and partly from his desire of communicating, in a clear and comprehensive manner, the principal ideas contained in some manuscripts which he had purchased.

He considered it also as a proper preparatory step to a future publication, of a more scientific and extensive work, chiefly extracted from the manuscripts above-mentioned.

These consist of all the late Mr. Overend's† papers, with a treatise on the Science of Music and Composition by Dr. Boyce‡, in his own hand writ-

* A copy of this book is now the property of T. Sikes, Esq. of Hackney, who, although personally unknown, has liberally lent it to the Author.

† Organist of Isleworth, Middlesex.

‡ Some of Dr. Pepusch's MSS. which escaped the search of Sir J. Hawkins, were the foundation of Dr. Boyce's theory: the subject was pursued through his mature years, and then occupied the whole attention of Mr. Overend. These papers, which have now been accumulating for half a century, are fortunately completed by the friendship of Mr. R. Cooke, who has favoured the Author, by lending him a manuscript of Mr. Travers, which contains examples composed upon the principles of Dr. Pepusch, and which was in the collection of the late Dr. Cooke, an early patron of the Author.

ing. The Possessor of such important tracts on the subject of harmonics, and of ancient music, can by no means think himself justified in suffering the labours of so great a master as Dr. Boyce to moulder silently away.

The liberal friendship of Dr. Arnold, has kindly presented to the Author all the materials which he had formerly prepared for a publication of the same nature, and generously allowed them to be used in the present work: thus adding another proof of that regard, which, extended through the last twelve years, has placed the Author in those situations he now holds in the profession.

The Author is also happy to acknowledge how much he is indebted to Dr. Burney, not merely for the information conveyed by his valuable publications, but particularly for the goodness with which he has suffered his name to grace the present undertaking*, and for the permission he has given to the Author, to consult him on the more difficult parts of this intended Dictionary.

The following specimen of the manner in which the work will be executed, is submitted to the judgment of the public; and any useful remarks, by which a greater degree of perfection may be attained, will be esteemed a particular favour.

* Sir Wm. Parsons has also highly promoted this design, by assisting the Author with some scarce treatises out of the late Dr. Worgan's library; a particular account of which will be given in the proper place.

DICTIONARY OF MUSIC.

A, One of the seven letters used in Music to express the names of the notes.

There are four sounds in common use, which bear this name: the base *A*, the tenor *A*, the treble *a*, and *a*² in alt, which are thus represented in notes:

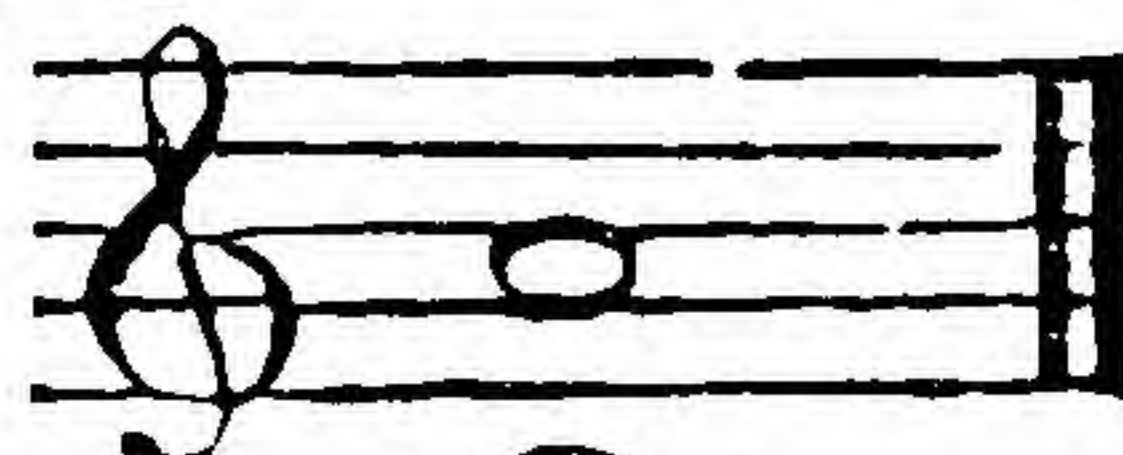
Base *A* on the first space



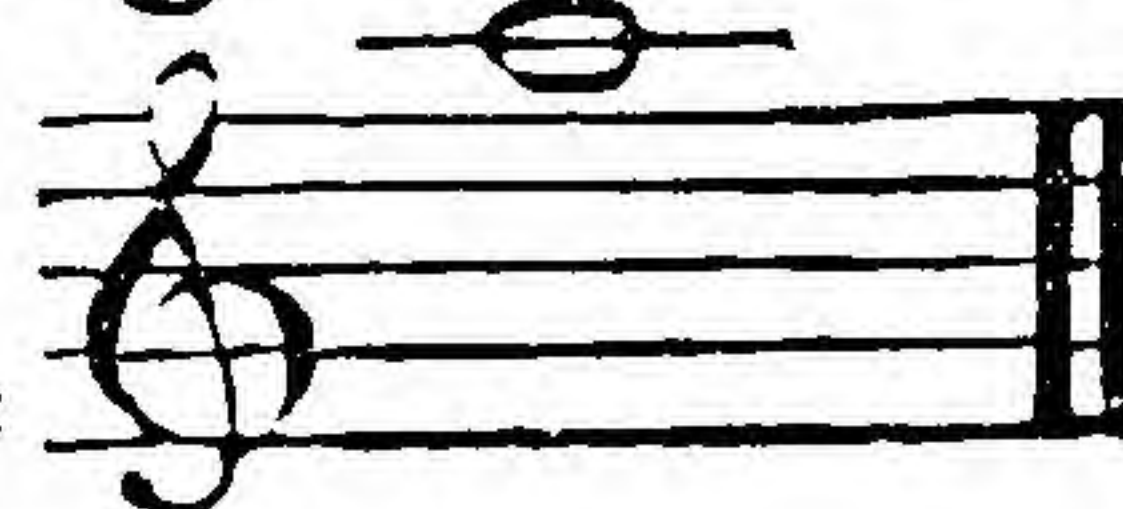
Tenor *A* { on the second line below the treble staff,
or,
on the fifth line of the base staff
and in the different C clefs, on the line below that upon which the clef is placed.



Treble *a* on the second space



aa, or *a*² { (in alt), on the first line, above the treble staff



These additional lines, above or below, are called also ledger lines.

The double base, or violone, and keyed instruments in general, have also another double *A* *A*, or *A*² an octave below the base *A* on the first space.

The violin, and the additional keys of the grand piano forte, have another *a*³, an octave above that which is in alt.

To distinguish these different sounds, without the trouble of using always musical notation, the following manner of representing them will be adopted:

*A*²

below

A

base

A

tenor

a

treble

*a*²

alt

*a*³

(in altissimo)

By these means, if occasion requires, several octaves may be marked higher or lower than instruments can reach, by only adding the numerals 4, 5, 6, 7, &c. to the *A* in the base descending, or to the *a* in the treble ascending.

This note, taken in any of its situations, is the greater sixth of the natural scale in the major mode, and the key-note of the same scale in the minor mode.

It answers to the syllable **LA** of the **Guidonian natural** hexachord used by the Italians in solimisation, and is always termed **LA** by the French, as the sixth note of their octave, whether sharp, flat, or natural.

The note **a**, of the treble, is taken also as a general sound to which the pitch of all instruments, in a concert, is regulated, because the second open string of the violin, and the first of the viola, or tenor, are tuned to **a**, and the first of the violoncello to the tenor **A** in the octave below.—*L'Abbé Roussier* has made some remarks on this subject.—(*Memoire de l'Académie de Musique des Anciens*, p. 102.)

This note, when the key-note of its own major mode, requires three sharps, viz. **F**, **C**, and **G**, to be placed at the clef, to form its diatonic scale. But when it is made **A flat**, then it requires four flats, viz. **B**, **E**, **A**, and **D**, to form its diatonic scale in the major mode.

Any of these notes, when natural, are found upon keyed instruments, such as the organ, harpsichord, &c. by taking the right hand key of the two long ones, which are placed between every parcel of the three short ones.

A sharp, upon the organ or harpsichord, &c. is the same key as **B flat**, namely, the next short key to the right.

A flat, on the contrary, is the same key as **G sharp**, namely, the next short key to the left.

(2) **A**, a contraction in the score for the word **alto**, or counter tenor part.

(3) **A**, an Italian preposition, signifying at, in, for, &c.

I. **AT**, as, *a son plaisir*, at pleasure.

II. **IN**, as, *a l'ordinaire*, in regular time.

III. **FOR**, as, *a deux voix*, for two voices.

(4) **ABACUS**. The whole range of keys in an organ, &c. also the key-board.

French. *Le Clavier*.
Italian. *La Tastatura*.
German. *Die Orgel*. } Several inventions have been proposed, by different persons, to render the scale perfect, by the insertion of more keys within the compass of an octave, but none of these alterations have been adopted.—

Kocher, vol. i. p. 444 to 491.—*Morimus, de instrumentis organorum*, p. 60.—*See John Huxley*, vol. iii. p. 99. vol. iv. p. 145.

The Temple organ has a separate key for **G sharp** and **A flat**, and also for **D sharp** and **E flat**: these form the enharmonic diesis, or quarter tone—a difference very perceptible

tible to the ear.—(*Dr. Burney*, vol. iii, 439.—*Sir J. Hawkins*, vol. iii, 144, iv, 354.)

Dr. Smith uses the term Abacus in its usual signification of *Mathematical Table*.—(*See Harmonics*, 2d edit. p. 201.)

(5) A'CADEMY, a name sometimes given to Musical Societies, or Concerts.

Academy of Ancient Music. A society formed by Mess. Needler, Pepusch, Galliard, Gates, &c. at the Crown and Anchor tavern, in the Strand, in the year 1710, which was continued under the direction of Dr. Cooke after the death of Dr. Pepusch in 1752, till 1790, when Dr. Arnold was appointed, and who still conducts the concerts.—(*Sir J. H.* vol. v, 123, 287, 346.—*Dr. Burney*, vol. iii, 535, iv, 636.)

It is proposed, for the sake of gaining room, to number every article, which will be found convenient when references are necessary; and also to make an Alphabetical Index in each of the three foreign languages, with the numbers of those articles where the words are explained, as in the specimen (4) ABACUS.

The Author also intends to insert in the work, the names, and descriptions, of musical instruments, with a brief account of English Masters lately deceased, to which will be added, a list of Theoretical Writers, with the dates of their works; and, *if thought necessary*, a general arrangement of all the articles contained in the Dictionary, in distinct classes, similar to that useful method adopted in the last edition of Chambers' Encyclopædia, by Dr. Rees.

London, 1st March, 1798